PugetSoundPartnership
our sound, our community, our chance

Hood Canal Action Area Workshop (Port Hadlock)

March 5, 2008

Workshop Summary

Meeting Purpose

The Puget Sound Partnership held a workshop in Port Hadlock on March 5, 2008 to gather perspectives from stakeholders and add local knowledge and expertise to Partnership work. The meeting focused on addressing the question: *What is the status of the health of Puget Sound and the greatest threats to it?*

Meeting Overview

Approximately 55 people attended the workshop at the Inn at Port Hadlock. Among those represented were local and tribal governments, local organizations, businesses, federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, and citizens, all working for the protection and restoration of Puget Sound.

Meeting Summary

Teri King, Washington Sea Grant and Ecosystem Coordination Board member, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming. Teri introduced Chris Townsend, Special Assistant to the Executive Director for the Puget Sound Partnership.. Chris described the Puget Sound Partnership, the six ecosystem goals and the Action Agenda process. Chris reviewed the next steps including the status and threats analysis, the topic forums and incorporating public input into the Action Agenda.

Chris Townsend also presented the status and threats analysis. He indicated that Mary Ruckelshaus, NOAA scientist, is synthesizing information from existing data sources to produce a current snapshot of the health of Puget Sound. Chris emphasized that the data is not complete; graphics shown are only examples of how to represent the data. Chris stressed that local data is important, and that we welcome information from meeting participants.

Duane Fagergren, Puget Sound Partnership Regional Liaison, introduced Mike Fredson, Mason County, author of the pictorial history, *Hood Canal*. Mike shared some history of Hood Canal and encouraged participants to “restore the magic” of the Hood Canal area.

Duane Fagergren highlighted existing assessments in the Hood Canal area. He discussed local dissolved oxygen monitoring programs collecting quality real-time data, local funding available for collecting data on nitrogen in groundwater, local efforts to build models to gauge program effectiveness, the need for more education to change human behavior, and the need for local feedback during breakout group discussions.

Angie Thomson, the meeting facilitator, encouraged participants to continue participating in the dialogue by filling out inventory comment forms, meeting comment forms, or submitting comments online.

The following is a list of questions and comments heard following the presentations. Answers are indicated with italics:

- There was an article in the Kitsap Sun that said that the biggest threat to the Sound is run-off. I didn't hear anything mentioned here about that. I also heard that chemicals coming through municipal sewage treatment facilities are another problem. Two billion gallons of sewage drain into the Sound every day. They are finding birth control hormones in fish that are affecting their reproductive rates. We need to address these things before we do anything else. *Absolutely. I should have mentioned stormwater. It is a huge problem. The more urbanized we become, the more run-off we create. There are a huge amount of toxics going into the Sound. When the Partnership looks across the whole Puget Sound, the Hood Canal might not appear to have significant problems but we know that certain local areas have toxics problems. I have heard that birth control and caffeine are affecting the reproductive systems of species.*

- If we submitted our inventory form and we don't see it in the summary, should we be worried? *No. The inventories submitted on spreadsheets are just taking a little more time enter. You are welcome to contact us and we will double-check.*

Five topic specific workgroups, based on the ecosystem goals, were asked to consider and provide input on indicators currently being used, threats to Puget Sound and criteria for establishing priorities. The topic specific discussion notes will be available upon request. Key responses are highlighted below:

What are the biggest threats to the Puget Sound?

Water Quality	• Stormwater, logging/road building • Population and climate change • Effluents • Lack of science
Water Quantity	• Climate change • Limited monitoring capabilities • Lack of historic records/baseline data • Fragmented data sets • Seawater intrusion • Preventable waste • Impervious surfaces • Growth

	• Poor planning and implementation
Species/Biodiversity	• Lack of inventory/status • Habitat degradation/loss • Lack of holistic approach • Inadequate outreach and education
Human Health/Quality of Life	• Population increase • Lack of public access • Poor land use • Poor explanation of quality of life • Competing land interests • Lack of incentives • Politics
Habitat/Land Use	• Forest conversion and impervious surfaces • Shoreline modifications • Lack of infrastructure/growth management issues • Air quality • Lack of financial incentives • Lack of BMPs (Best Management Practices) • Enforcement of existing laws • Population growth • Political will and human values • Habitat fragmentation

What criteria are most important in evaluating potential projects?

Water Quality	• Science • Prevention • Accountability • Monitoring ability
Water Quantity	• Affordability • Practicality • Legality • Public supportability • Immediacy • Political will • Multiple benefits • Scalability • Adaptability
Species/Biodiversity	• Abundance • Distribution • Diversity

	• Productivity • Maintaining long-term datasets
Human Health/Quality of Life	• Accountability • Addresses key threats • Cost/benefit analysis • Measurability • Cumulative impacts • Greatest good for the long term • Preservation and protection • Creative
Habitat/Land Use	• Addresses causes not symptoms • Addresses highest priority threats • Has multiple benefits • Is cost effective • Leverages existing successful policies • Has public buy-in • Utilizes sound science

Following the breakout sessions there was an open discussion for comments and questions. The following are the responses. Answers are highlighted in italics.

- I see long-term monitoring as a common threat throughout the breakout groups. When I look at a timeline of monitoring the Sound, there are gaps corresponding to changes in political leadership. We cannot make this political. Can the Partnership oversee monitoring a long term dataset that would not be subject to changes brought on by elections? *We are gathering datasets, analyzing, and then making recommendations for the long term integrated system that will be funded.*

- Long-term monitoring was also discussed in the water quality group. We need monitoring so we can know if we've fulfilled our legislative mandate in 2020. *We need to select indicators, targets and benchmarks. We need indicators that are sensitive to human activity so that we can see this progress* before *2020. We want to be able to change our actions if we are off course. Publically, we will be tracking a handful of iconic indicators even though scientists will have hundreds of indicators that they will track.*

- I agree that science and monitoring are important. Science comes first. When people apply for building permits they should get a pamphlet sent to them with recommendations for building and living on the Sound. We need to make people more sensitive to the nature around them. People who are coming from out-of-state don't know anything about Puget Sound. I also think we should ban weed and feed. We need to start right away on run-off issues and chemicals in

municipal treatment plants. I'm worried that we'll spend five or 10 years studying instead of working. *Good points. We have seen stormwater emerging as a common theme throughout the Sound. We recognize that education is also important.*

- Hood Canal is very different from the rest of the Sound. Run-off might not be the biggest issue here. It is populated differently and has different topography. Be careful not to generalize. *Each area is unique. We developed the action areas to address this issue.*

- Long-term monitoring is very important, especially to Hood Canal. We need a centralized monitoring system so that it is not left to the political science of each jurisdiction. *We will be looking at priorities in the next step of the Action Agenda process.*

- We are blaming septic systems for our problems but municipal sewage is a bigger problem. We need to stop toxic discharge and medicinal discharge. We need to filter out chemicals but it will take time. We can also improve our water flows; we can hold water and save it for late summer.

- How common are the themes today in the breakout groups compared to the other action areas? *There are definitely commonalities. We've heard stormwater, land conversion, lack of education, and monitoring at all the meetings. This group had a very substantive water quantity discussion.*

- I said in my group that we should get rid of the Hood Canal Bridge and I was not being completely facetious. What happens if we find that this actually is the biggest threat? What if we can't handle five million more people?

- I'm curious if the people at the South Central Puget Sound Action Area workshop listed commute time as an indicator of the health of Puget Sound. *I don't believe they did, but we'll include that in our notes.*

- I'm curious how many people carpooled to this meeting and how that is saving Hood Canal. *I don't think we need to put people on the spot but we do need to be aware of personal behavior and we can make changes in our own lives like carpooling, not using disposable cups, not using plastic bags.*

Wrap-Up

Chris Townsend thanked people for coming and let them know what to expect at the community conversation. He invited participants to stay involved by filling out comment cards and/or submitting comments on the Web site.

Angie Thomson assured participants that if they are interested in more than one action area, they do not need to go to each meeting. All information will be shared with topic forum leads and throughout the Partnership.